

7 simulate performance of the medical procedure with said associated medical instrument in
8 accordance with said measured manipulation; and

9 a coupling mechanism for receiving said peripheral and operatively coupling said peripheral
10 to said sensing assembly, wherein said coupling mechanism includes dimension adjustment means
11 for automatically adjusting coupling mechanism dimensions in response to translational
12 manipulation of said peripheral relative to said interface apparatus.

1 13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said sensing assembly includes:

2 a force feedback unit to apply force feedback to said peripheral in response to control signals
3 from said simulation system.

1 14. The apparatus of claim 12 further including:

2 a mock anatomical site having an orifice for receiving said peripheral and providing access
3 to said coupling mechanism; and

4 a pivoting mechanism to selectively pivot said mock anatomical site into a particular
5 orientation to perform the medical procedure.

1 15. The apparatus of claim 12 further including:

2 a mock anatomical site having an orifice for receiving said peripheral;

3 a block of resilient material disposed between said mock anatomical site and said coupling
4 mechanism; and

5 a guide tube extending from said orifice through said block to said coupling mechanism to
6 guide said peripheral within said interface apparatus;

7 wherein said block provides resiliency to simulate forces and movement of said orifice
8 encountered during performance of the medical procedure.

1 16. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein said resilient material includes foam.

1 17. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said associated medical instrument includes an
2 endoscope, and said medical procedure is an endoscopic procedure.

1 18. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said peripheral is in the form of an endoscope and
2 includes:

3 a working channel;

4 a working channel peripheral selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a
5 working channel tool; and

6 a sensor to measure manipulation of said working channel peripheral and transmit
7 information associated with said working channel peripheral manipulation to the simulation system
8 to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical procedure with said
9 associated working channel tool in accordance with said working channel peripheral manipulation.

1 19. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein said peripheral further includes a working channel
2 force feedback unit to apply force feedback to said working channel peripheral.

1 20. The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said peripheral is in the form of an endoscope and
2 includes:

3 a navigation tube for insertion into the interface apparatus to traverse the simulated anatomy
4 of the virtual patient, wherein a distal end of said navigation tube is associated with a camera;

5 a tube position peripheral selectively manipulable by the user and associated with the distal
6 end of said navigation tube; and

7 a sensor to measure manipulation of said tube position peripheral and transmit information
8 associated with said tube position peripheral manipulation to the simulation system to enable the
9 simulation system to simulate flexing of said navigation tube distal end and positioning of said
10 camera within the simulated anatomy during performance of the medical procedure in accordance
11 with said tube position peripheral manipulation.

1 21. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein:

2 said medical procedure is an interventional radiology procedure;

3 said peripheral includes a plurality of nested instruments each selectively manipulable by the
4 user and associated with a corresponding medical instrument;

5 said apparatus further includes a plurality of said coupling mechanisms to operatively couple
6 said nested instruments to said sensing assembly; and

7 said sensing assembly includes peripheral sensing means for measuring manipulation of each
8 nested instrument within the simulated anatomy and providing information associated with said
9 nested instrument manipulation to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate

10 performance of the medical procedure with said corresponding medical instruments in accordance
11 with said nested instrument manipulation.

1 22. The apparatus of claim 12 further including a plurality of peripherals each selectively
2 manipulable by the user and associated with a corresponding medical instrument and a plurality of
3 said coupling mechanisms to operatively couple said plurality of peripherals to said sensing
4 assembly;

5 wherein said sensing assembly includes peripheral sensing means for measuring
6 manipulation of each peripheral within the simulated anatomy and providing information associated
7 with manipulation of each said peripheral to the simulation system to enable the simulation system
8 to simulate performance of the medical procedure with said associated medical instruments and
9 exchange of said associated medical instruments during the medical procedure in accordance with
10 said manipulation of said peripherals.

1 23. The apparatus of claim 13 further including a capture mechanism to engage a distalmost
2 portion of said peripheral and operatively couple said peripheral to said sensing assembly.

1 24. The apparatus of claim 23 wherein said capture mechanism includes:
2 a disc attached to a proximal end of said dimension adjustment means;
3 a first annular washer disposed proximate and connected to said disc;
4 a second annular washer disposed toward a distal end of said capture mechanism;

5 a third annular washer disposed distally of and connected to said second annular washer for
6 receiving said peripheral;

7 a tubular member disposed between said disc and said third annular washer, wherein a
8 tubular member proximal end is disposed through said first annular washer and attached to said disc
9 and a tubular member distal end is disposed through said second annular washer and attached to said
10 third annular washer; and

11 a spring disposed between said first and second annular washers to elongate and compress
12 said tubular member in response to translational manipulation of said peripheral relative to said
13 interface apparatus to facilitate adjustment of tubular member cross-sectional dimensions;

14 wherein expansion of said spring in response to insertion of said peripheral within said
15 interface apparatus elongates said tubular member, thereby decreasing said tubular member cross-
16 sectional dimensions to engage said peripheral, and wherein compression of said spring in response
17 to withdrawal of said peripheral from said interface apparatus compresses said tubular member,
18 thereby increasing said tubular member cross-sectional dimensions to release said peripheral.

1 25. The apparatus of claim 24 wherein said tubular member includes a spirally wound
2 material.

1 26. The apparatus of claim 23 wherein said capture mechanism is disposed within said
2 sensing assembly and includes:

3 a peripheral interface having a plurality of jaws defined in a distal portion thereof to surround
4 and engage said peripheral;

5 a spring disposed over said peripheral interface to bias said jaws to a normally closed state;
6 an expander disposed proximate said spring and having a conical distal end to manipulate
7 said jaws to enter open and closed states; and

8 a pivotable actuator disposed proximate said expander to manipulate said expander to
9 overcome said spring bias and control actuation of said jaws for entry into said closed and open
10 states for capturing and releasing said peripheral.

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1 27. The apparatus of claim 26 wherein said capture mechanism further includes:
2 an automatic capture and release mechanism to automatically capture and release said
3 peripheral.

1 28. The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said automatic capture and release mechanism
2 includes:

3 a rod connected to said sensing assembly via a friction bracket;

4 a pivotable bracket disposed on said sensing assembly proximate said rod;

5 an actuator extension coupled to said pivotable actuator to control actuation of said jaws to
6 capture and release said peripheral;

7 a support bracket disposed on said rod for manipulating said actuator extension to control
8 actuation of said jaws;

9 a bracket spring disposed between said sensing assembly and said pivotable bracket to apply
10 force to said pivotable bracket to pivot that bracket about said support bracket and manipulate said

11 actuator extension relative to said support bracket to control actuation of said jaws in response to
12 insertion and withdrawal of said peripheral within said interface apparatus;

13 wherein said peripheral interface captures said peripheral in response to said actuator
14 extension being forced against said support bracket by said pivotable bracket and said bracket spring
15 and releases said peripheral in response to said actuator extension being forced away from said
16 support bracket by said pivotable bracket and said bracket spring.

29. The apparatus of claim 28 wherein said peripheral includes a plurality of nested
instruments each selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a corresponding medical
instrument, and said interface apparatus further includes:

a plurality of said sensing assemblies, each including said capture mechanism and associated
with a corresponding nested instrument for engaging and measuring manipulation of that nested
instrument and providing information associated with manipulation of that nested instrument to the
simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical procedure
with said corresponding medical instruments in accordance with said nested instrument
manipulation; and

a plurality of coupling mechanisms each associated with a corresponding nested instrument
for operatively coupling said corresponding nested instrument to a corresponding sensing assembly;

wherein said friction bracket of each said sensing assembly capture mechanism includes a
selectively adjustable friction member to adjust frictional forces between that friction bracket and
a corresponding capture mechanism rod to control resistance applied by that sensing assembly to
translational motion of said corresponding nested instrument;

16 wherein said friction member simulates frictional forces encountered between nested
17 instruments during performance of the medical procedure.

1 30. The apparatus of claim 23 wherein:

2 said dimension adjustment means includes an inner tubular member and an outer tubular
3 member, wherein said inner tubular member is disposed within said outer tubular member and slides
4 relative to said outer tubular member to automatically adjust said coupling mechanism dimensions
5 in response to translational manipulation of said peripheral relative to said interface apparatus;

6 said capture mechanism is disposed at a proximal end of said inner tubular member to engage
7 said peripheral; and

8 a distal end of said inner tubular member is attached to said sensing assembly, wherein said
9 inner tubular member is manipulated in accordance with said peripheral manipulation and said
10 sensing assembly measures said peripheral manipulation by measuring manipulation of said inner
11 tubular member.

1 31. The apparatus of claim 30 further including first and second supports, wherein said
2 sensing assembly includes:

3 first and second pulleys disposed on said first and second supports, respectively;

4 a belt disposed about and between said first and second pulleys;

5 a peripheral motion assembly attached to said belt and said inner tubular member distal end
6 to facilitate measurement of manipulation of said inner tubular member to measure said peripheral
7 manipulation, wherein said peripheral motion assembly is movable between said first and second

8 supports in response to translational manipulation of said peripheral relative to said interface
9 apparatus and further includes a rotation sensor to measure rotational motion of said peripheral by
10 measuring rotational motion of said inner tubular member; and

11 a translation sensor disposed proximate said first pulley to measure translational motion of
12 said peripheral by measuring rotation of said first pulley, wherein said peripheral motion assembly
13 manipulates said belt to rotate said first and second pulleys during movement between said first and
14 second supports in response to said translational manipulation of said peripheral;

15 wherein said force feedback unit is disposed proximate said second pulley to apply force
16 feedback to said peripheral in response to control signals from said simulation system by impeding
17 rotation of said second pulley, wherein said second pulley applies a resistive force to said belt in
18 response to said impeded rotation to impede translational motion of said peripheral motion assembly,
19 and thereby impede translational motion of said peripheral.

1 32. The apparatus of claim 24 wherein said apparatus further includes bias means for biasing
2 said capture mechanism to an open state to enable entry and release of said peripheral within said
3 capture mechanism.

1 33. The apparatus of claim 32 further including first and second supports, wherein said
2 sensing assembly is disposed between said first and second supports and said capture mechanism
3 is disposed at a proximal end of said coupling mechanism, and wherein said bias means includes:

4 a first magnet attached to a distal portion of said coupling mechanism; and

5 a second magnet attached to said first support;

6 wherein attraction forces of said first and second magnets bias said spring to a compressed
7 state to facilitate increased cross-sectional dimensions of said tubular member and entry and release
8 of said peripheral within said capture mechanism.

1 34. The apparatus of claim 23 wherein said dimension adjustment means includes
2 stabilization means for stabilizing said peripheral against buckling during manipulation of said
3 peripheral within said interface apparatus to perform the medical procedure.

1 35. The apparatus of claim 34 wherein:
2 said stabilization means includes an inner tubular member and an outer tubular member,
3 wherein said inner tubular member is disposed within said outer tubular member and slides relative
4 to said outer tubular member to stabilize said peripheral against buckling and to automatically adjust
5 said coupling mechanism dimensions in response to translational manipulation of said peripheral
6 relative to said interface apparatus; and

7 a distal end of said inner tubular member is attached to said sensing assembly to operatively
8 couple said peripheral to said sensing assembly.

1 36. The apparatus of claim 34 further including first and second supports, wherein said
2 sensing assembly includes:

3 first and second pulleys disposed on said first and second supports, respectively;

4 a belt disposed about and between said first and second pulleys;

5 a peripheral motion assembly attached to said belt and said stabilization means to facilitate
6 measurement of said peripheral manipulation and including said capture mechanism to engage said
7 peripheral, wherein said peripheral motion assembly is movable between said first and second
8 supports in response to translational manipulation of said peripheral relative to said interface
9 apparatus and further includes a rotation sensor to measure rotational motion of said peripheral; and

10 a translation sensor disposed proximate said first pulley to measure translational motion of
11 said peripheral by measuring rotation of said first pulley, wherein said peripheral motion assembly
12 manipulates said belt to rotate said first and second pulleys during movement between said first and
13 second supports in response to said translational manipulation of said peripheral;

14 wherein said force feedback unit is disposed proximate said second pulley to apply force
15 feedback to said peripheral in response to control signals from said simulation system by impeding
16 rotation of said second pulley, wherein said second pulley applies a resistive force to said belt in
17 response to said impeded rotation to impede translational motion of said peripheral motion assembly,
18 and thereby impede translational motion of said peripheral.

1 37. The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said dimension adjustment means includes a bellows
2 and said stabilization means includes a series of openings defined in said bellows for receiving said
3 peripheral and operatively coupling said peripheral to said sensing assembly.

1 38. The apparatus of claim 34 further including first and second supports, wherein said
2 sensing assembly includes:

3 first and second pulleys disposed adjacent said first and second supports, respectively;

4 a belt disposed about and between said first and second pulleys; and
5 a peripheral motion assembly attached to said belt and including said capture mechanism to
6 engage said peripheral, wherein said coupling mechanism is disposed between said peripheral
7 motion assembly and said first support, and wherein said peripheral motion assembly is movable
8 between said first and second supports in response to translational manipulation of said peripheral
9 relative to said interface apparatus and further includes:

10 a rotation sensor to measure rotational motion of said peripheral; and

11 a translation sensor to measure translational motion of said peripheral;

12 wherein said force feedback unit is disposed proximate said first pulley to apply force
13 feedback to said peripheral in response to control signals from said simulation system by impeding
14 rotation of said first pulley, wherein said first pulley applies a resistive force to said belt in response
15 to said impeded rotation to impede translational motion of said peripheral motion assembly, and
16 thereby impede translational motion of said peripheral.

1 39. The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said peripheral includes a plurality of nested
2 instruments each selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a corresponding medical
3 instrument, and said interface apparatus further includes:

4 first and second supports;

5 a plurality of said sensing assemblies, each associated with a corresponding nested
6 instrument for measuring manipulation of that nested instrument within the simulated anatomy and
7 providing information associated with manipulation of that nested instrument to the simulation

8 system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical procedure with said
9 corresponding medical instruments in accordance with said nested instrument manipulation;

10 a plurality of said coupling mechanisms each associated with a corresponding nested
11 instrument for stabilizing said corresponding nested instrument against buckling and operatively
12 coupling said corresponding nested instrument to a corresponding sensing assembly, wherein each
13 said sensing assembly includes:

14 first and second pulleys disposed toward said first and second supports, respectively;

15 a belt disposed about and between said first and second pulleys;

16 a peripheral motion assembly attached to said belt and including said capture
17 mechanism to engage a corresponding nested instrument, wherein said peripheral motion
18 assembly is movable between said first and second supports in response to translational
19 manipulation of said corresponding nested instrument relative to said interface apparatus and
20 further includes:

21 a rotation sensor to measure rotational motion of said corresponding nested
22 instrument; and

23 a translation sensor to measure translational motion of said corresponding
24 nested instrument; and

25 a force feedback unit disposed proximate said first pulley to apply force feedback to
26 said corresponding nested instrument in response to control signals from said simulation
27 system by impeding rotation of said first pulley, wherein said first pulley applies a resistive
28 force to said belt in response to said impeded rotation to impede translational motion of said

29 peripheral motion assembly, and thereby impede translational motion of said corresponding
30 nested instrument;

31 wherein said peripheral motion assemblies are successively arranged between said first and
32 second supports, and wherein each said capture mechanism is configured to capture a nested
33 instrument of a particular dimension and permit lesser dimensioned instruments to extend through
34 that peripheral motion assembly.

Q. 1 40. The apparatus of claim 34 further including:

2 first and second supports;

3 a plurality of independent peripherals each selectively manipulable by the user and
4 associated with a corresponding medical instrument;

5 a plurality of said sensing assemblies each associated with a corresponding independent
6 peripheral for measuring manipulation of said corresponding independent peripheral within the
7 simulated anatomy and providing information associated with manipulation of that independent
8 peripheral to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the
9 medical procedure with said corresponding medical instruments in accordance with said independent
10 peripheral manipulation;

11 a plurality of said coupling mechanisms each associated with a corresponding independent
12 peripheral for stabilizing said corresponding independent peripheral against buckling and operatively
13 coupling said corresponding independent peripheral to a corresponding sensing assembly, wherein
14 each said sensing assembly includes:

15 first and second pulleys disposed toward said first and second supports, respectively;

16 a belt disposed about and between said first and second pulleys;

17 a peripheral motion assembly attached to said belt and including said capture
18 mechanism to engage said corresponding independent peripheral, wherein said peripheral
19 motion assembly is movable between said first and second supports in response to
20 translational manipulation of said corresponding independent peripheral relative to said
21 interface apparatus and further includes:

a' 22 a rotation sensor to measure rotational motion of said corresponding
23 independent peripheral; and

24 a translation sensor to measure translational motion of said corresponding
25 independent peripheral; and

26 a force feedback unit disposed proximate said first pulley to apply force feedback to
27 said corresponding independent peripheral in response to control signals from said
28 simulation system by impeding rotation of said first pulley, wherein said first pulley applies
29 a resistive force to said belt in response to said impeded rotation to impede translational
30 motion of said peripheral motion assembly, and thereby impede translational motion of said
31 corresponding independent peripheral;

32 wherein said sensing assemblies are arranged in parallel relation within said interface
33 apparatus to measure manipulation of said independent peripherals.

1 41. The apparatus of claim 40 wherein:

2 at least one of said independent peripherals includes a plurality of nested instruments with
3 each nested instrument being selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a
4 corresponding medical instrument;

5 a plurality of said sensing assemblies are associated with said at least one nested peripheral,
6 wherein each nested peripheral sensing assembly is associated with a corresponding nested
7 instrument to engage, provide force feedback to and measure manipulation of that nested instrument;
8 and

9 a plurality of said coupling mechanisms are associated with said at least one nested
10 peripheral with each associated coupling mechanism stabilizing a corresponding nested instrument
11 against buckling and operatively coupling said corresponding nested instrument to a corresponding
12 sensing assembly.

1 42. The apparatus of claim 40 further including:

2 a mock anatomical site having a plurality of orifices, wherein each said orifice is associated
3 with a corresponding independent peripheral for receiving that peripheral;

4 a block of resilient material disposed between said mock anatomical site and said coupling
5 mechanisms; and

6 a plurality of guide tubes each associated with a corresponding orifice and extending from
7 that orifice through said block to a corresponding coupling mechanism to guide said independent
8 peripheral associated with that orifice within said interface apparatus;

9 wherein said block provides resiliency to simulate forces and movement of said orifices
10 encountered during performance of the medical procedure.

1 43. An interface apparatus for operatively interconnecting instruments to a simulation
2 system to enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a
3 simulated anatomy of a virtual patient, said interface apparatus comprising:

4 a plurality of peripherals each selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a
5 corresponding medical instrument; and

6 a plurality of sensing assemblies each associated with a corresponding peripheral for
7 measuring manipulation of that peripheral within the simulated anatomy and providing information
8 associated with manipulation of said corresponding peripheral to the simulation system to enable the
9 simulation system to simulate performance of the medical procedure with said associated medical
10 instruments and exchange of said associated medical instruments during the medical procedure in
11 accordance with said manipulation of said peripherals.

1 44. An interface apparatus for operatively interconnecting instruments to a simulation
2 system to enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a
3 simulated anatomy of a virtual patient, said interface apparatus comprising:

4 a peripheral selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a medical instrument;

5 a sensing assembly to measure manipulation of said peripheral and transmit information
6 associated with said manipulation to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to
7 simulate performance of the medical procedure with said associated medical instrument in
8 accordance with said measured manipulation;

9 a mock anatomical site having an orifice for receiving said peripheral and providing access
10 to said sensing assembly; and

11 a pivoting mechanism to selectively pivot said mock anatomical site into a particular
12 orientation to perform the medical procedure.

1 45. An interface apparatus for operatively interconnecting instruments to a simulation
2 system to enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a
3 simulated anatomy of a virtual patient, said interface apparatus comprising:

4 a peripheral selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a medical instrument;

5 a sensing assembly to measure manipulation of said peripheral and transmit information
6 associated with said manipulation to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to
7 simulate performance of the medical procedure with said associated medical instrument in
8 accordance with said measured manipulation;

9 a mock anatomical site having an orifice for receiving said peripheral and providing access
10 to said sensing assembly;

11 a block of resilient material disposed between said mock anatomical site and said sensing
12 assembly; and

13 a guide tube extending from said orifice through said block toward said sensing assembly to
14 guide said peripheral within said interface apparatus;

15 wherein said block provides resiliency to simulate forces and movement of said orifice
16 encountered during performance of the medical procedure.

1 46. The apparatus of claim 45 wherein said resilient material includes foam.

1 47. An interface apparatus for operatively interconnecting instruments to a simulation
2 system to enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a
3 simulated anatomy of a virtual patient, said interface apparatus comprising:

4 a peripheral having a plurality of nested instruments each selectively manipulable by the user
5 and associated with a corresponding medical instrument;

6 a plurality of sensing assemblies each associated with a corresponding nested instrument for
7 measuring manipulation of said corresponding nested instrument within the simulated anatomy and
8 providing information associated with manipulation of that nested instrument to the simulation
9 system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical procedure with said
10 corresponding medical instruments in accordance with said nested instrument manipulation;

11 wherein each said sensing assembly includes a peripheral motion assembly including a
12 capture mechanism to engage said corresponding nested instrument, and said peripheral motion
13 assembly is movable in response to translational manipulation of said corresponding nested
14 instrument relative to said interface apparatus and further includes:

15 a rotation sensor to measure rotational motion of said corresponding nested
16 instrument; and

17 a translation sensor to measure translational motion of said corresponding
18 nested instrument;

19 wherein said peripheral motion assemblies are successively arranged, and wherein each said
20 capture mechanism is configured to capture a nested instrument of a particular dimension and permit
21 lesser dimensioned instruments to extend through that peripheral motion assembly.

1 48. An interface apparatus for operatively interconnecting instruments to a simulation
2 system to enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a
3 simulated anatomy of a virtual patient, said interface apparatus comprising:

4 a plurality of independent peripherals each selectively manipulable by the user and associated
5 with a corresponding medical instrument;

6 a plurality of sensing assemblies each associated with a corresponding independent
7 peripheral for measuring manipulation of said corresponding independent peripheral within the
8 simulated anatomy and providing information associated with manipulation of that independent
9 peripheral to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the
10 medical procedure with said corresponding medical instruments in accordance with said independent
11 peripheral manipulation;

12 wherein each said sensing assembly includes a peripheral motion assembly including a
13 capture mechanism to engage said corresponding independent peripheral, and said peripheral motion
14 assembly is movable in response to translational manipulation of said corresponding independent
15 peripheral relative to said interface apparatus and further includes:

16 a rotation sensor to measure rotational motion of said corresponding
17 independent peripheral; and

18 a translation sensor to measure translational motion of said corresponding
19 independent peripheral;

20 wherein said sensing assemblies are arranged in parallel relation within said interface
21 apparatus to measure manipulation of said independent peripherals.

1 49. In an interface apparatus for operatively interconnecting a peripheral to a simulation
2 system to enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a
3 simulated anatomy of a virtual patient, wherein said interface apparatus includes a sensing assembly
4 to measure manipulation of said peripheral and transmit information associated with said
5 manipulation to the simulation system and a coupling mechanism to operatively couple said
6 peripheral to said sensing assembly, a capture mechanism to engage said peripheral comprising:

7 a tubular member disposed between proximal and distal ends of said capture mechanism for
8 engaging said peripheral; and

9 a spring disposed between said proximal and distal ends of said capture mechanism and over
10 said tubular member to elongate and compress said tubular member in response to translational
11 manipulation of said peripheral relative to said interface apparatus to facilitate adjustment of tubular
12 member cross-sectional dimensions;

13 wherein expansion of said spring in response to insertion of said peripheral within said
14 interface apparatus elongates said tubular member, thereby decreasing said tubular member cross-
15 sectional dimensions to engage said peripheral, and wherein compression of said spring in response
16 to withdrawal of said peripheral from said interface apparatus compresses said tubular member,
17 thereby increasing said tubular member cross-sectional dimensions to release said peripheral.

1 50. The mechanism of claim 49 further including:

2 a disc attached to a proximal end of said coupling mechanism;

3 a first annular washer disposed proximate and connected to said disc;

4 a second annular washer disposed toward said distal end of said capture mechanism; and

5 a third annular washer disposed distally of and connected to said second annular washer for
6 receiving said peripheral;

7 wherein a tubular member proximal end is disposed through said first annular washer and
8 attached to said disc and a tubular member distal end is disposed through said second annular washer
9 and attached to said third annular washer;

10 wherein said spring is disposed between said first and second annular washers to elongate
11 and compress said tubular member in response to translational manipulation of said peripheral
12 relative to said interface apparatus to facilitate adjustment of tubular member cross-sectional
13 dimensions.

1 51. The mechanism of claim 49 wherein said tubular member includes a spirally wound
2 material.

1 52. In an interface apparatus for operatively interconnecting a peripheral to a simulation
2 system to enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a
3 simulated anatomy of a virtual patient, wherein said interface apparatus includes a sensing assembly
4 to measure manipulation of said peripheral and transmit information associated with said
5 manipulation to the simulation system and a coupling mechanism to operatively couple said
6 peripheral to said sensing assembly, a capture mechanism to engage said peripheral comprising:

7 a peripheral interface having a plurality of jaws defined in a distal portion thereof to surround
8 and engage said peripheral;

9 a spring disposed over said peripheral interface to bias said jaws to a normally closed state;

10 an expander disposed proximate said spring and having a conical distal end to manipulate
11 said jaws to enter open and closed states; and
12 a pivotable actuator disposed proximate said expander to manipulate said expander to
13 overcome said spring bias and control actuation of said jaws for entry into said closed and open
14 states for capturing and releasing said peripheral.

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1 53. The mechanism of claim 52 further including an automatic capture and release
2 mechanism to automatically capture and release said peripheral.

1 54. The mechanism of claim 53 wherein said automatic capture and release mechanism
2 includes:

3 a rod connected to said sensing assembly via a friction bracket;

4 a pivotable bracket disposed on said sensing assembly proximate said rod;

5 an actuator extension coupled to said pivotable actuator to control actuation of said jaws to
6 capture and release said peripheral;

7 a support bracket disposed on said rod for manipulating said actuator extension to control
8 actuation of said jaws;

9 a bracket spring disposed between said sensing assembly and said pivotable bracket to apply
10 force to said pivotable bracket to pivot that bracket about said support bracket and manipulate said
11 actuator extension relative to said support bracket to control actuation of said jaws in response to
12 insertion and withdrawal of said peripheral within said interface apparatus;

13 wherein said peripheral interface captures said peripheral in response to said actuator
14 extension being forced against said support bracket by said pivotable bracket and said bracket spring
15 and releases said peripheral in response to said actuator extension being forced away from said
16 support bracket by said pivotable bracket and said bracket spring.

1 55. In an interface having a peripheral selectively manipulable by a user and associated
2 with a medical instrument, a sensing assembly to measure manipulation of the peripheral and a
3 coupling mechanism to operatively couple the peripheral to the sensing assembly, a method of
4 enabling the user to interact with a simulation system via the interface to perform a medical
5 procedure on a simulated anatomy of a virtual patient comprising the steps of:

6 (a) operatively coupling the peripheral to the sensing assembly via the coupling mechanism;
7 (b) automatically adjusting coupling mechanism dimensions in response to translational
8 manipulation of the peripheral relative to the interface to facilitate measurement of peripheral
9 manipulation;

10 (c) measuring manipulation of the peripheral via the sensing assembly; and

11 (d) transmitting information associated with the measured manipulation from the interface
12 to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical
13 procedure with the associated medical instrument in accordance with the measured manipulation.

1 56. The method of claim 55 further including the step of:

2 (e) applying force feedback to the peripheral in response to control signals from the
3 simulation system.

1 57. The method of claim 55 wherein the interface further includes a mock anatomical site
2 having an orifice for receiving the peripheral and providing access to the coupling mechanism, and
3 step (a) further includes:

4 (a.1) selectively pivoting the mock anatomical site into a particular orientation to perform
5 the medical procedure.

1 58. The method of claim 55 wherein the interface further includes a mock anatomical site
2 having an orifice for receiving the peripheral, a block of resilient material disposed between the
3 mock anatomical site and the coupling mechanism and a guide tube to guide the peripheral within
4 the interface, and step (a) further includes:

5 (a.1) simulating forces and movement of the orifice encountered during performance of the
6 medical procedure by forming a resilient passage within the interface for the peripheral to traverse,
7 wherein step (a.1) further includes:

8 (a.1.1) forming the resilient passage by positioning the guide tube within the interface
9 to extend from the orifice through the block to the coupling mechanism.

1 59. The method of claim 55 wherein the associated medical instrument includes an
2 endoscope, and the medical procedure is an endoscopic procedure.

1 60. The method of claim 59 wherein the peripheral is in the form of an endoscope and
2 includes a working channel, a working channel peripheral selectively manipulable by the user and

3 associated with a working channel tool and a sensor to measure manipulation of the working channel
4 peripheral, and step (c) further includes:

5 (c.1) measuring manipulation of the working channel peripheral via the sensor; and

6 step (d) further includes:

7 (d.1) transmitting information associated with the working channel peripheral manipulation
8 to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical
9 procedure with the associated working channel tool in accordance with the working channel
10 peripheral manipulation.

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1 61. The method of claim 60 further including the step of:

2 (e) applying force feedback to the working channel peripheral.

1 62. The method of claim 59 wherein the peripheral is in the form of an endoscope and
2 includes a navigation tube for insertion into the interface to traverse the simulated anatomy of the
3 virtual patient, a tube position peripheral selectively manipulable by the user and associated with
4 a distal end of the navigation tube and a sensor to measure manipulation of the tube position
5 peripheral, wherein the distal end of the navigation tube is associated with a camera, and step (c)
6 further includes:

7 (c.1) measuring manipulation of the tube position peripheral via the sensor; and

8 step (d) further includes:

9 (d.1) transmitting information associated with the tube position peripheral manipulation to
10 the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate flexing of the navigation tube

11 distal end and positioning of the camera within the simulated anatomy during performance of the
12 medical procedure in accordance with the tube position peripheral manipulation.

1 63. The method of claim 55 wherein the medical procedure is an interventional radiology
2 procedure, the peripheral includes a plurality of nested instruments each selectively manipulable by
3 the user and associated with a corresponding medical instrument, the interface further includes a
4 plurality of said coupling mechanisms each associated with a corresponding nested instrument, and
5 step (a) further includes:

6 (a.1) operatively coupling the nested instruments to the sensing assembly via the coupling
7 mechanisms;

8 step (b) further includes:

9 (b.1) automatically adjusting dimensions of the coupling mechanisms in response to
10 translational manipulation of the corresponding nested instruments to facilitate measurement of
11 nested instrument manipulation;

12 step (c) further includes:

13 (c.1) measuring manipulation of each nested instrument within the simulated anatomy via
14 the sensing assembly; and

15 step (d) further includes:

16 (d.1) transmitting information associated with the measured nested instrument manipulation
17 to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical
18 procedure with the corresponding medical instruments in accordance with the nested instrument
19 manipulation.

1 64. The method of claim 55 wherein the interface further includes a plurality of peripherals
2 each selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a corresponding medical instrument and
3 a plurality of said coupling mechanisms each associated with a corresponding peripheral, and step
4 (a) further includes:

5 (a.1) operatively coupling the plurality of peripherals to the sensing assembly via the
6 coupling mechanisms;

7 step (b) further includes:

8 (b.1) automatically adjusting dimensions of the coupling mechanisms in response to
9 translational manipulation of the corresponding peripherals to facilitate measurement of peripheral
10 manipulation;

11 step (c) further includes:

12 (c.1) measuring manipulation of each peripheral within the simulated anatomy via the
13 sensing assembly; and

14 step (d) further includes:

15 (d.1) transmitting information associated with manipulation of each peripheral to the
16 simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical procedure
17 with the associated medical instruments and exchange of the associated medical instruments during
18 the medical procedure in accordance with the manipulation of the peripherals.

1 65. The method of claim 56 wherein the interface further includes a capture mechanism to
2 engage the peripheral, and step (a) further includes:

3 (a.1) engaging a distalmost portion of the peripheral via the capture mechanism to
4 operatively couple the peripheral to the sensing assembly.

1 66. The method of claim 65 wherein the capture mechanism includes a tubular member
2 disposed between proximal and distal ends of the capture mechanism and a spring disposed over the
3 tubular member to elongate and compress the tubular member, and step (a.1) includes:

4 (a.1.1) decreasing cross-sectional dimensions of the tubular member to engage the peripheral
5 by expanding the spring in response to insertion of the peripheral within the interface; and

6 (a.1.2) increasing the tubular member cross-sectional dimensions to release the peripheral
7 by compressing the spring in response to withdrawal of the peripheral from the interface.

1 67. The method of claim 65 wherein the capture mechanism is disposed within the
2 sensing assembly and includes a peripheral interface having a plurality of jaws defined in a distal
3 portion thereof to surround and engage the peripheral, a spring disposed over the peripheral interface,
4 an expander having a conical distal end to manipulate the jaws, and a pivotable actuator to
5 manipulate the expander to actuate the jaws, wherein step (a.1) further includes:

6 (a.1.1) biasing the jaws to a normally closed state via the spring; and

7 (a.1.2) manipulating the jaws to enter open and closed states for capturing and releasing the
8 peripheral by manipulating the pivotable actuator to cause the expander to overcome the spring bias
9 and control actuation of the jaws.

1 68. The method of claim 67 wherein the capture mechanism further includes an automatic
2 capture and release mechanism to capture and release the peripheral, and step (a.1.2) further
3 includes:

4 (a.1.2.1) automatically capturing and releasing the peripheral via the automatic capture and
5 release mechanism.

1 69. The method of claim 68 wherein the automatic capture and release mechanism includes
2 a rod connected to the sensing assembly via a friction bracket, a pivotable bracket disposed on the
3 sensing assembly proximate the rod, an actuator extension coupled to the pivotable actuator to
4 control actuation of the jaws, a support bracket disposed on the rod and a bracket spring disposed
5 between the sensing assembly and the pivotable bracket, and step (a.1.2.1) further includes:

6 (a.1.2.1.1) pivoting the pivotable bracket about the support bracket to manipulate the
7 actuator extension relative to the support bracket to control actuation of the jaws in response to
8 insertion and withdrawal of the peripheral within the interface;

9 (a.1.2.1.2) capturing the peripheral in response to the actuator extension being forced against
10 the support bracket during insertion of the peripheral within the interface; and

11 (a.1.2.1.3) releasing the peripheral in response to the actuator extension being forced away
12 from the support bracket during withdrawal of the peripheral from the interface.

1 70. The method of claim 69 wherein the peripheral includes a plurality of nested instruments
2 each selectively manipulable by the user and associated with a corresponding medical instrument,
3 the interface further includes a plurality of said sensing assemblies each associated with a

4 corresponding nested instrument to measure manipulation of that nested instrument and a plurality
5 of said coupling mechanisms each associated with a corresponding nested instrument to operatively
6 couple that nested instrument to a corresponding sensing assembly, and wherein the friction bracket
7 of each sensing assembly capture mechanism includes a selectively adjustable friction member, and
8 step (a) further includes:

9 (a.2) operatively coupling the nested instruments to the corresponding sensing assemblies
10 via the corresponding coupling mechanisms;

11 step (b) further includes:

12 (b.1) automatically adjusting the dimensions of the coupling mechanisms in response to
13 translational manipulation of the corresponding nested instruments to facilitate measurement of
14 nested instrument manipulation;

15 step (c) further includes:

16 (c.1) measuring manipulation of each nested instrument via the corresponding sensing
17 assemblies; and

18 step (d) further includes:

19 (d.1) transmitting information associated with manipulation of the nested instruments to the
20 simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical procedure
21 with the corresponding medical instruments in accordance with the nested instrument manipulation;
22 and

23 (d.2) simulating frictional forces encountered between nested instruments during
24 performance of the medical procedure by adjusting frictional forces between the friction bracket of

25 each sensing assembly and a corresponding capture mechanism rod to control resistance applied by
26 that sensing assembly to translational motion of the corresponding nested instrument.

1 71. The method of claim 65 wherein the coupling mechanism includes an inner tubular
2 member disposed within an outer tubular member, the capture mechanism is disposed at a proximal
3 end of the inner tubular member to engage the peripheral, a distal end of the inner tubular member
4 is attached to the sensing assembly, and step (b) further includes:

5 (b.1) automatically adjusting the coupling mechanism dimensions in response to
6 translational manipulation of the peripheral relative to the interface by sliding the inner tubular
7 member relative to the outer tubular member; and

8 step (c) further includes:

9 (c.1) measuring manipulation of the peripheral by measuring manipulation of the inner
10 tubular member, wherein the inner tubular member is manipulated in accordance with manipulation
11 of the peripheral.

1 72. The method of claim 65 wherein step (a.1) further includes:

2 (a.1.1) biasing the capture mechanism to an open state to enable entry and release of the
3 peripheral within the capture mechanism.

1 73. The method of claim 65 wherein step (b) further includes:

2 (b.1) stabilizing the peripheral against buckling during manipulation of the peripheral within
3 the interface to perform the medical procedure.

1 74. The method of claim 73 wherein the coupling mechanism includes an inner tubular
2 member disposed within an outer tubular and a distal end of the inner tubular member is attached
3 to the sensing assembly, and step (b.1) further includes:

4 (b.1.1) stabilizing the peripheral against buckling and automatically adjusting the coupling
5 mechanism dimensions in response to translational manipulation of the peripheral relative to the
6 interface by sliding the inner tubular member relative to the outer tubular member.

9 1 75. The method of claim 65 wherein the interface further includes first and second supports,
2 the sensing assembly includes first and second pulleys respectively disposed on the first and second
3 supports, a belt disposed about and between the first and second pulleys and a peripheral motion
4 assembly attached to the belt and coupled to the peripheral, wherein the peripheral motion assembly
5 is movable between the first and second supports in response to translational manipulation of the
6 peripheral relative to the interface, and step (c) further includes:

7 (c.1) measuring rotational motion of the peripheral; and

8 (c.2) measuring translational motion of the peripheral by measuring rotation of the first
9 pulley, wherein the peripheral motion assembly manipulates the belt to rotate the first and second
10 pulleys during movement between the first and second supports in response to translational
11 manipulation of the peripheral; and

12 step (e) further includes:

13 (e.1) applying force feedback to the peripheral in response to control signals from the
14 simulation system by impeding rotation of the second pulley, wherein the second pulley applies a

15 resistive force to the belt in response to the impeded rotation to impede translational motion of the
16 peripheral motion assembly, and thereby impede translational motion of the peripheral.

1 76. The method of claim 65 wherein the interface further includes first and second supports,
2 the sensing assembly includes first and second pulleys respectively disposed adjacent the first and
3 second supports, a belt disposed about and between the first and second pulleys and a peripheral
4 motion assembly attached to the belt and coupled to the peripheral, wherein the peripheral motion
5 assembly is movable between the first and second supports in response to translational manipulation
6 of the peripheral relative to the interface, and step (c) further includes:

7 (c.1) measuring rotational motion of the peripheral; and

8 (c.2) measuring translational motion of the peripheral by measuring translational motion of
9 the peripheral motion assembly, wherein the peripheral motion assembly manipulates the belt to
10 rotate the first and second pulleys during movement between the first and second supports in
11 response to translational manipulation of the peripheral; and

12 step (e) further includes:

13 (e.1) applying force feedback to the peripheral in response to control signals from the
14 simulation system by impeding rotation of the first pulley, wherein the first pulley applies a resistive
15 force to the belt in response to the impeded rotation to impede translational motion of the peripheral
16 motion assembly, and thereby impede translational motion of the peripheral.

1 77. The method of claim 73 wherein the coupling mechanism includes a bellows with a
2 series of openings defined therein, and step (b.1) further includes:

3 (b.1.1) stabilizing the peripheral against buckling by receiving the peripheral within the
4 openings to operatively couple the peripheral to the sensing assembly.

5 78. In an interface having a plurality of peripherals each selectively manipulable by a user
6 and associated with a corresponding medical instrument and a plurality of sensing assemblies each
7 associated with a corresponding peripheral for measuring manipulation of that peripheral, a method
8 of enabling the user to interact with a simulation system via the interface to perform a medical
9 procedure on a simulated anatomy of a virtual patient comprising the steps of:

10 (a) operatively coupling the peripherals to the corresponding sensing assemblies;

11 (b) measuring manipulation of each peripheral via the corresponding sensing assemblies;

12 and

1 (c) transmitting information associated with the measured manipulation from the interface
2 to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical
3 procedure with the associated medical instruments and exchange of the associated medical
4 instruments during the medical procedure in accordance with manipulation of the peripherals.

5 79. In an interface having a peripheral selectively manipulable by a user and associated with
6 a corresponding medical instrument, a sensing assembly to measure manipulation of the peripheral
7 and a mock anatomical site having an orifice for receiving the peripheral and providing access to the

4 sensing assembly, a method of enabling the user to interact with a simulation system via the interface
5 to perform a medical procedure on a simulated anatomy of a virtual patient comprising the steps of:

6 (a) operatively coupling the peripheral to the sensing assembly;

7 (b) selectively pivoting the mock anatomical site into a particular orientation to perform the
8 medical procedure;

9 (c) measuring manipulation of the peripheral via the sensing assembly; and

10 (d) transmitting information associated with the measured manipulation from the interface
11 to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical
12 procedure with the associated medical instrument in accordance with the peripheral manipulation.

1 80. In an interface having a peripheral selectively manipulable by a user and associated with
2 a corresponding medical instrument, a sensing assembly to measure manipulation of the peripheral,
3 a mock anatomical site having an orifice for receiving the peripheral, a block of resilient material
4 disposed between the mock anatomical site and the sensing assembly and a guide tube to guide the
5 peripheral within the interface, a method of enabling the user to interact with a simulation system
6 via the interface to perform a medical procedure on a simulated anatomy of a virtual patient
7 comprising the steps of:

8 (a) operatively coupling the peripheral to the sensing assembly;

9 (b) simulating forces and movement of the orifice encountered during performance of the
10 medical procedure by forming a resilient passage within the interface for the peripheral to traverse,
11 wherein step (b) further includes:

12 (b.1) forming the resilient passage by positioning the guide tube within the interface
13 to extend from the orifice through the block toward the sensing assembly;
14 (c) measuring manipulation of the peripheral via the sensing assembly; and
15 (d) transmitting information associated with the measured manipulation from the interface
16 to the simulation system to enable the simulation system to simulate performance of the medical
17 procedure with the associated medical instrument in accordance with the peripheral manipulation.

81. In an interface for operatively interconnecting a peripheral to a simulation system to
enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a simulated
anatomy of a virtual patient, wherein the interface includes a sensing assembly to measure
manipulation of the peripheral and transmit information associated with the manipulation to the
simulation system, a coupling mechanism to operatively couple the peripheral to the sensing
assembly and a capture mechanism having a tubular member disposed between proximal and distal
ends of the capture mechanism to engage the peripheral, a method of engaging the peripheral for
interaction with the interface comprising the steps of:

(a) decreasing cross-sectional dimensions of the tubular member to engage the peripheral
by expanding the tubular member in response to insertion of the peripheral within the interface; and
(b) increasing the tubular member cross-sectional dimensions to release the peripheral by
compressing the tubular member in response to withdrawal of the peripheral from the interface.

82. In an interface for operatively interconnecting a peripheral to a simulation system to
enable a user to interact with the simulation system to perform a medical procedure on a simulated

3 anatomy of a virtual patient, wherein the interface includes a sensing assembly to measure
4 manipulation of the peripheral and transmit information associated with the manipulation to the
5 simulation system, a coupling mechanism to operatively couple the peripheral to the sensing
6 assembly and a capture mechanism including a peripheral interface having a plurality of jaws defined
7 in a distal portion thereof to surround and engage the peripheral, a spring disposed over the
8 peripheral interface to bias the jaws to a normally closed position, an expander to manipulate the
9 jaws and a pivotable actuator to manipulate the expander to actuate the jaws to engage the peripheral,
10 a method of engaging the peripheral for interaction with the interface comprising the step of:

11 (a) actuating the jaws to enter open and closed states for capturing and releasing the
12 peripheral by manipulating the pivotable actuator to cause the expander to overcome the spring bias
13 and control actuation of the jaws.

1 83. The method of claim 82 wherein the capture mechanism further includes an automatic
2 capture and release mechanism to automatically capture and release the peripheral, and step (a)
3 further includes:

4 (a.1) automatically capturing and releasing the peripheral via the automatic capture and
5 release mechanism.

1 84. The method of claim 83 wherein the automatic capture and release mechanism includes
2 a rod connected to the sensing assembly via a friction bracket, a pivotable bracket disposed on the
3 sensing assembly proximate the rod, an actuator extension coupled to the pivotable actuator to

4 control actuation of the jaws, a support bracket disposed on the rod and a bracket spring disposed
5 between the sensing assembly and pivotable bracket, and step (a.1) further includes:

6 (a.1.1) pivoting the pivotable bracket about the support bracket to manipulate the actuator
7 extension relative to the support bracket to control actuation of the jaws in response to insertion and
8 withdrawal of the peripheral within the interface apparatus;

9 (a.1.2) capturing the peripheral in response to the actuator extension being forced against
10 the support bracket during insertion of the peripheral within the interface; and

11 (a.1.3) releasing the peripheral in response to the actuator extension being forced away from
12 the support bracket during withdrawal of the peripheral from the interface.